

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8, and 19-21 are presently active in this case. Claims 9 and 11 having been withdrawn from consideration as directed to a non-elected invention, Claims 7 and 12-18 having previously been canceled Claim has been amended and Claim 4 canceled by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-3, 6, 10 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Lin et al. (6,093,606), Claims 8, 19 and 21 were allowed, and Claims 4-5 were objected to as depending upon a rejected base claim, but were otherwise indicated as including allowable subject matter.

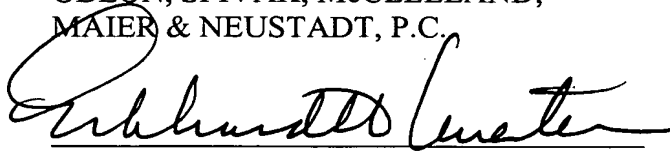
Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of Claims 8, 19 and 21 and the indication that Claims 4 and 5 include allowable subject matter. In light of this latter indication, and to expedite issuance of a patent from the present application, Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable Claim 4, thereby effectively placing Claim 4 in independent form, and Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice. The dependency of Claim 5 has been corrected accordingly.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, of the active claims, only allowed or allowable active claims are pending. In that regard, Applicants request rejoinder of

withdrawn Claims 9 and 11, which depend from allowable amended Claim 1. Accordingly, all the presently pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eckhard H. Kuesters', written over a horizontal line.

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